

THE TILLAMOOK THYMES

The Tillamook Master Gardener Association
October 2017



The President's Corner
October 2017
Neal Lemery



The end of summer is a good time to take stock of where I'm at in our garden. What worked? What was successful, and what wasn't?

I look at our garden as a laboratory, a grand experiment. The application of sustainable gardening principles and practices has given me some valuable tools and insights, making me a better gardener and making our land more productive.

Improving the soil in our raised beds has produced healthier vegetables, including our one zucchini that seems capable of feeding the entire neighborhood this year. And, thinning my apples in late June, even though it is painful to pluck off half of the baby apples, has resulted in large, juicy apples in September.



I keep experimenting with varieties of tomatoes, and have had success with a number of cherry tomatoes. My Romas are still deciding if they want to ripen on the vine, or if they want to come into the house in October and ripen on the dining room floor.

TCMGA has also enjoyed successes. Our learning garden was a delight to the International master gardeners' tour group, and our 1,600 visitors during the fair. Who didn't love the toy train and all of the experimental gardening projects?

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Next year's garden tour is promising to be great fun, and our wide range of community service projects have engaged many people, and introduced sustainable gardening practices to even more community members.

We've revised our mission statement, renewing our focus on education. In thinking about our role in the community, as well as my tasks in the garden, the joy of asking questions and thinking outside of the box often yields surprising and rewarding results.

What I really can bring to my garden, as well as to master gardening, is that curiosity, that sense of wonderment and challenge, and keep asking our questions.

"Let go of certainty. The opposite isn't uncertainty. It's openness, curiosity and a willingness to embrace paradox, rather than choose up sides. The ultimate challenge is to accept ourselves exactly as we are, but never stop trying to learn and grow."

— Tony Schwartz

Happy gardening!

Karen's Korner

by

Karen Keltz

I thought that since the rains—and good book-reading weather—have arrived, this month I'd like to share with you some information about two books, one I've read and one I'm reading, that I think you may find interesting. One is called *The Hidden Life of Trees*, by Peter Wohlleben. I learned of this book when Joan Cutuly recommended it and read from it at a recent Arts Accelerated Open Mic. To quote from the inside flap, "In this international best seller, the author, a forester, makes the case that a forest is a social network. He draws on groundbreaking scientific discoveries to describe how trees are like human families: tree parents live together with their children, communicate with them, support them as they grow, share nutrients with those who are sick or struggling and even warn each other of impending dangers."

One of my favorite parts was how trees create stink to keep predators at bay. When giraffes came to eat in a grove of thorn acacias, the eaten acacias produced toxic substances into their leaves which giraffes don't like. The toxins also warned the other trees in the grove who immediately began producing the same toxins so that the giraffes left that grove searching for another. But they had to walk upwind because downwind other acacias received the warning message and began producing toxins as well. Beeches, spruce and oaks do a similar kind of thing. Defense by bitter taste and stench.

Trees also communicate by their roots with the help of fungi, and they also feed one another the same way. In addition they communicate by means of olfactory, visual, and electrical signals as well as sound waves. Those are just two out of many amazing things you learn about trees so that after reading this transfixing book, you come away even more convinced that forests matter.

When I was a kid and read about paleontologists and their explorations into the ground, I wondered how all that soil got deposited there on top of things. I wondered how long it would take for my house to be beneath the earth. I wondered if the earth were getting larger and larger with all that accumulated dirt and would soon be too heavy for its orbit around the sun. I also wondered if there were any mummies buried beneath my house that would rise up and torture us, but that was due to too many old movies, more than my own conjecture and curiosity.

Paul Bogard, in his book *The Ground Beneath Us: From the Oldest Cities to the Last Wilderness, What Dirt Tells Us About Who We Are*, went searching for answers to his questions about soil in Manhattan, London, Alaska, and Gettysburg battlefields, among other places.

He asked questions such as, "When a teaspoon of soil contains millions of species, and when we pave over the earth on a daily basis, what does that mean for our future? What is the risk to our food supply, the planet's wildlife, the soil on which every life-form depends?"

He points out that we are paving over the soil from which comes 97% of our food. Once we pave over that soil, it is dead. "...humans already influence fully 98 percent of the places where it's possible for us to grow rice, corn, or wheat," he states. Another point he makes is that our human immune systems need what soil is comprised of, that we become ill if we are deprived of those microbes.

His conclusion is that if we are searching for the sacred, it is no farther than under our feet. "The ground is the easiest resource to forget, and the last we should" he writes. I don't know about you, but I cry when I see arable land being paved over and housing developments arising.

What a crime! I know that's another section of land that won't be available to feed the world. Bogard's book reinforces my gratitude for growing up on a farm, surrounded by dirt and microbiota, and for having chosen to feed myself, my family, and others from our own little patch of soil. I'm so thankful that groups like Master Gardeners tend their gardens and teach others to do so.

Finally, in this list of good, thought-provoking reading, let's give thanks for friends who share their gently-read gardening magazines with us, for they give us another happy place to go to when things are rough. Louise Bogard has shared with me older issues of *Country Gardens*, *Horticulture*, and *Garden Gate*, among others. Since the articles are seasonal, the content really doesn't go out of style or get too old and I have fun seeing what gardens others have designed, which helps me to dream of my own. Another magazine that is fun to read and to write for is *Greenprints*. I encourage you to read several issues and then put together an essay or a poem that would work for them about your experiences with trees and soil, and submit it to them. What better way to enjoy the rains?



My Sage Broom

by

Janet Anderson

The sun is setting earlier, the leaves are falling, pumpkins are ranging in the fields, and Halloween is just around the corner. Besides the black hats, corn candy, straw bales, and hot apple cider, we have the specter of witches flinging themselves across the full moonlit sky.

“Don't Judge a Witch until You've Flown a Mile on Your Broom”

My broom is crooked. I walked four miles on a deserted beach until I found the piece of wood that called out to me. Actually, it flung itself into my arms. Once home, I scrounged around in the back yard to find the rushes. They are curly rushes from the pond. When cut and dried they are pliable but strong, just like so many of the women I know. Adding swigs of rosemary, sage, feverfew, and thyme complete the sweeping part of this tool. When cut to a perfect length, about 13 inches, of course, and then tied up with bindweed vines, they form a suitable tool.

Ocean breeze, pond algae and the fresh smell of dirt waft through the room as I sing while sweeping away the trolls of the day. Sage is the dominant herb-y fragrance. Makes me think of the dressing I make during the winter months. Does it soothe the soul? A clean floor sure does.

At night, sometimes when I awaken I can hear the soft sough of the waves through my open window. It is either that or traffic on 101. Doesn't matter. It is what my brain makes of it during the drowsy nighttime hours when I frequently hear the hoot of the owl. The soft burbling of the pond waterfall lets me know that power is constant and that all is right. The swish - swish - swish of the sage broom is comforting in a way that is surprising to me. I'd rather be cavorting outside with the sage than inside the hut with it.

After 200 years of use, the feel of the bumpily smooth broom handle is routine. Even the old sage, rosemary, and thyme twigs persist in their way. The soul feeling of a swept earth is epic and worthy of bare feet.

My broom and I get along great. We even sing to each other.

*Hello swishing, my old friend
I've come to talk with you again
Because a vision softly creeping
Left its seeds while I was sleeping
And the vision that was planted in my brain
Still remains
Within the sound of swishing.*

With apologies to Paul and Art



Redwoods
by
Neal Lemery

I love to grow trees, and one of my favorites is the coastal redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*).

When I was a child, our family trip to the Redwoods resulted in me bringing home a redwood burl, and watching it sprout. I nurtured the tender sprouts until it was sturdy enough to plant outside. Today, that tree is over eighty feet tall.

The coastal redwood tree does fairly well in western Tillamook County. One of the oldest local plantings is on Highway 22, at the Castle Rock forest service campground about five miles south of Hebo.



My experience is that they do not tolerate salt air and thus are not found next to the beach. However, they love summer coastal fog and transpire a significant amount of their water needs.

I suspect there are variations, as coastal redwood habitat varies from sea level to several thousand feet in northern California, and grows inland there in drier microclimates. Some of my plantings were lost during cold winters, yet my successes seem to tolerate our winters well. I try to protect small trees from winter east winds.

I live inland, off South Prairie Road, and our summer climate is becoming hotter and drier. My little redwoods need serious watering with a bucket several times a month in the summer and early fall. My trees that are over ten years old are now thirty feet high and grow several feet a year.

I've also been successful with their Chinese cousin, the dawn redwood, *Metasequoia*. Its "Dinosaur Age" range was worldwide, but it was thought to be extinct, until a forest was discovered in China in the 1940s. Unique among sequoias, it is deciduous. A beautiful specimen is on the south lawn of the county courthouse.

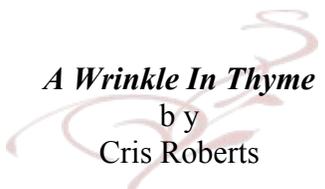
The giant sequoia, *Sequoiadendron giganteum*, whose home is in the Sierra Nevada mountains, also does well here. My neighbor's row along the lane grows one to two feet a year. Several giant sequoias are thriving next to the river on the south end of Nehalem, and were planted in the 1990s.

All three species are now found around the world, with large plantings of coastal redwoods growing abundantly in Ireland and New Zealand.

Propagation can be successful, with cuttings in moist peat and potting soil, though they are slow growers compared to the small starts I get by mail. My attempts at generating seeds has failed in potting soil. Naturally, they germinate after fires clear the soil to bare rocks.

I've had good luck with mail orders, <http://jonsteen.com>, (for all three species) as well as the gift shops at Redwood National Park. They are hard to find in nurseries. Potted trees tend to be root bound and don't thrive at first, unlike the small starts available by mail. They like their space!

https://www.na.fs.fed.us/spfo/pubs/silvics_manual/Volume_1/sequoia/sempervirens.htm
<https://www.nps.gov/redw/planyourvisit/upload/redw%20seedlings.pdf>



A Wrinkle In Thyme

by
Cris Roberts

Each school year, Tillamook School District #9 chooses Initiatives on which to focus. This year's chosen topic is, "Resiliency". As teachers at Trask River High School, housed inside a twelve-foot security fence, we see this word demonstrated three-dimensionally. I've been thinking of Webster's definitions of this word: 1) The power or ability to return to the original form, position, etc., after being bent, compressed, or stretched; elasticity. 2) The ability to recover readily from illness, depression, adversity, or the like; buoyancy.

Last Friday, one of my incredible Master Gardener volunteers, John Laurin, was commenting on one of our unusual plants in the OYA garden. Actually, it wasn't the plant that was so unusual (Rainbow Swiss Chard), but rather the place where the plant was growing. In our garden, we take great care to prepare our soil before planting; fertilize appropriately and water our little, live sprouts so they will become the best that they can be. Often, however, we get plants that are started by seed that has escaped our attention. The Chard John spotted, which has been growing for most of a year now, is lush, tall and vibrant in colors of red, yellow, pink and white. It is, in fact, the healthiest Chard we have in the entire garden. It's location: A gravel walk-way! The expression, "Go Figure!", comes to mind. John's attention was arrested (!) not only by the health of that plant, but by the obvious, living metaphor of life lived under adversity (a condition marked by misfortune, calamity, or distress...).

Many of our youth are tackling difficulties beyond their years while under incarceration. Sometimes childhood backgrounds, socio-economic situations, unwise choices, genetics or even being in the wrong place at the wrong time have contributed to the adversity they experience in their lives and behind these very fences.

As staff members, teachers and volunteers at OYA and Trask River High School, we have been given the assignment, the *privilege*, to interact with youth who, like the vibrant Swiss Chard, are growing under Adverse conditions. The outcomes are varied, of course, but we can choose to carry hope into our working environment and offer to our youth living lessons on how to hike over those hard bumps, foothills and mountains of life. Resiliency.

Photo of T.R.A.P. Youth in the Garden with a vibrant Swiss Chard



The new home being built for the chickens



More photos from T.R.A.P.

Harvesting the vegetables for a delicious salad



The baby Quail



Evelyn VonFelt instructed us on some wasp-like insects that are found in our area.



Master Gardener John Lauren sharing his naturally fermented pickles



Master Gardener Richard Snyder sharing his unusual beans he dried for seeds



Chicken Times
by
Wyonna

Much to report.....Lois' daughter, Yvette, has joined our club, voted in by exclamation but she must change her name. You cannot be a member of the Hens Only with a name like Yvette. Possible choices ~ LaVerne, Louise, Loretta, LuAnne.

In a surprising turn of events, Queen Bee, (my daughter) wants to join also. The name she has chosen is Kentucky Fried. Seems an odd choice for a club member celebrating chickens?

In less frivolous news, Lois has once again refused to host our meeting. I understand the hatred of housework. Who wants to clean? I only lift a dust rag when Queen Bee threatens to visit. But Lois had the nerve to tell me not only would she not be the hostess, she was dropping out of the Hens. Well, I have news. No one drops out of the Hens. Once a Hen always a Hen. We are the Mafia of Hen Clubs. Think about that, Lois.

More news ~ Lois has been repeatedly attacked by Larry the Seabright Rooster that Dixie gave me. Just yesterday he chased her out of the chicken coop, across the yard and onto the back porch. Clearly her turf. She too can be vicious. Grabbing a large stick, she counter attacked and the battle was on. This war has been going on for months and there seems to be no let up. Larry clearly hates her and now is also attacking Yvette (LouAnne).

Why you ask are my chickens living with Lois.? I have no place for them. My neighbor is a raccoon lover and having them here would be certain death. I have purchased a nearby property and plan to build several blocks away. I will be able to kill raccoons to my hearts delight. Hopefully the chickens will be safe. Only last week Lois had two eagles circling her property. In addition to chickens she has guinea fowl, peacocks, small dogs and cats. Any would be easy picking for an eagle.

We have another potential new member, Ernestine. I think she will be a great addition and another member beside Lois who actually owns chickens. Ernestine has about 30 hens and lives on a large property outside of town with Gerald who I thought was her husband. But no: her partner. They have been living in sin for 12 years having a high old time.

All of her chickens were acquired from our local co-op and include Rhode Island Reds and Wyandottes plus eight two-month old Ameraucanas, Barred Rocks and Buff Orpingtons. The Ameraucanas are a special favorite called the Easter chicken because they lay pink, green and blue eggs.

What fascinating discussions we can have:

Dangers of breeding chickens. Sharon H.'s garage burned down when the heat lamp keeping the chicks warm fell into the dry straw. The rooster named Capt. Henry Adama (named after the Commander of Battleship Gallatica) became a local celebrity when he ushered all 28 hens to safety losing only two. He put in regular appearances at weddings and concerts. Last year when a coyote came onto Sharon's porch and killed Henry, his death was reported in the Gales Creek Journal. Sharon continues to mourn him as do her neighbors. He never once attacked a person unlike my rooster, Larry

Other important topics: how best to dispense with predators. My daughter's B.F. thinks I need a gun. He has chosen a 22 pistol, called a deuce-deuce, which is the weapon of choice of Queen Latifah in her feud with Foxy Brown. Lois has one with a laser which makes it very easy to kill the villain with a bullet between the eyes.

Less exciting but important ~ how to treat for ticks, lice and that ever-present pasty butt.

Stay tuned for next month's newsletter. What to do when Hens fight?



OCTOBER
GARDEN HINTS FROM YOUR OSU EXTENSION FACULTY
for
Western Oregon

“The Oregon State University Extension Service encourages sustainable gardening practices.

Preventative pest management is emphasized over reactive pest control. Always identify and monitor problems before acting and opt for the least toxic approach that will remedy the problem. The conservation of biological control agents (predators, parasitoids) should be favored over chemical controls.

Use chemical controls only when necessary and only after thoroughly reading the pesticide label. First consider cultural, then physical and biological controls. Choose the least-toxic options (insecticidal soaps, horticultural oils, botanical insecticides, and organic and synthetic pesticides — when used judiciously).

PLANNING

- If needed, improve soil drainage needs of lawns before rain begins.

MAINTENANCE AND CLEAN UP

- Drain or blow out your irrigation system, insulate valve mechanisms, in preparation of winter.
- Recycle disease-free plant material and kitchen vegetable and fruit scraps into compost. Don't compost diseased plants unless you are using the “hot compost” method (120 degrees to 150 degrees Fahrenheit).
- Use newspaper or cardboard covered by mulch to discourage winter and spring annual weeds or remove a lawn area for conversion to garden beds. For conversion, work in the paper and mulch as organic matter once the lawn grass has died.
- Clean and paint greenhouses and cold frames for plant storage and winter growth.
- Harvest sunflower heads; use seed for birdseed or roast for personal use.
- Dig and store potatoes; keep in darkness, moderate humidity, temperature about 40 degrees Fahrenheit. Discard unused potatoes if they sprout. Don't use as seed potatoes for next year.
- Harvest and immediately dry filberts and walnuts; dry at 95 degrees to 100 degrees Fahrenheit.
- Ripen green tomatoes indoors. Check often and discard rotting fruit.
- Harvest and store apples; keep at about 40 degrees Fahrenheit, moderate humidity.
- Place mulch over roots of roses, azaleas, rhododendrons and berries for winter protection.
- Trim or stake bushy herbaceous perennials to prevent wind damage.
- To suppress future pest problems, clean up annual flower beds by removing diseased plant materials, overwintering areas for insect pests; mulch with manure or garden compost to feed the soil and suppress weeds.
- Cover asparagus and rhubarb beds with a mulch of manure or compost.
- Clean, sharpen and oil tools and equipment before storing for winter.
- Store garden supplies and fertilizers in a safe, dry place out of reach of children.

- Prune out dead fruiting canes in raspberries.
- Spade organic material and lime into garden soil, as indicated by soil test results (if necessary and the weather permits).
- Harvest squash and pumpkins; keep in dry area at 55 degrees to 60 degrees Fahrenheit.

PLANTING/PROPAGATION

- Dig and divide rhubarb. (Should be done about every four years.)
- Plant garlic for harvesting next summer.
- Propagate chrysanthemums, fuchsias, and geraniums by stem cuttings.
- Save seeds from the vegetable and flower garden. Dry, date, label, and store in a cool and dry location.
- Plant ground covers and shrubs.
- Dig and store geraniums, tuberous begonias, dahlias and gladiolas.
- Pot and store tulips and daffodils to force into early bloom, indoors, in December and January.

PEST MONITORING AND MANAGEMENT

- Monitor landscape plants for problems. Don't treat unless a problem is identified.
- Remove and dispose of windfall apples that might be harboring apple maggot or codling moth larvae.
- Rake and destroy diseased leaves (apple, cherry, rose, etc.) or hot compost diseased leaves.
- Spray apple and stone fruit trees at leaf fall to prevent various fungal and bacterial diseases. For more information, see *Managing Diseases and Insects in Home Orchards* (PDF - EC 631).
- If moles and gophers are a problem, consider traps.
- Control fall-germinating lawn weeds while they are small. Hand weeding and weeding tools are particularly effective at this stage.

Houseplants and Indoor Gardening

- Early October: reduce water, place in cool area (50- 55 degrees Fahrenheit) and increase time in shade or darkness (12-14 hours) to force Christmas cactus to bloom in late December.
- Place hanging pots of fuchsias where they won't freeze. Don't cut back until spring.
- Check/treat houseplants for disease and insects before bringing indoors."

For additional OSU Extension gardening information, visit: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening>
Edited from: <http://extension.oregonstate.edu/gardening/gardening-calendar/october>

Photo taken from the Learning Garden



TCMGA Executive Board

Elected:

President: Neal Lemery
Past President: Barbara Castell
Vice President: Deborah Lincoln
Recording Secretary: Jodi Derrick
Corresponding Secretary:
Linda Stephenson
Treasurer: Larry Goss
Historian: Holly Yingling
OMGA Representative:
Marcille Ansgore
OMGA Alternative: Sam Sadler
Class Representatives:
2016: Arla Ayers
2015: Lisa McRae
Extension Agent: Joy Jones
Hospitality: Betty Lyons
Learning Garden:
Linda Stephenson

Appointed and Standing Committee Chairs

Audit: Jean Scholtz, Jon Orloff
Awards: Neal Lemery
Banquet: Cammy Hickman
Budget:
Larry Goss
Deborah Lincoln
Neal Lemery
Communication/Webmaster:
Cammy Hickman
Neal Lemery
Lisa McRae
Community Pruning Day:
Betty and Jake Lyons
Garden Tour: Karen Sarnaker
Betty Lyons
Publicity: Cammy Hickman
Volunteer Coordinator:
Sarah Ostermiller

Mentors: Linda Stephenson
Newsletter: Karen Sarnaker
Nominating Committee:
Barbara Casteel
Neal Lemery
Picnic: Linda Stephenson
Photo Contest: Holly Yingling
Plant Clinics:
North County Farmers Market:
Karen Sarnaker
Tillamook Farmers Market:
Marilyn Perl
South County Farmers Market:
Tim and Pam Burke
Plant Sale: Jodi Derrick

**CALENDAR OF EVENTS
OCTOBER 2017**

OCTOBER 5 LEARNING GARDEN, 9 AM - NOON
OCTOBER 10 TCMGA BOARD MEETING, 10AM - 12:30PM,
OSU EXTENSION OFFICE
OCTOBER 12 LEARNING GARDEN, 9 AM - NOON
OCTOBER 18 BONSAI CLUB, 6PM - 9PM, TPUD MEETING ROOM
OCTOBER 19 LEARNING GARDEN, 9 AM - NOON
OCTOBER 20 THYMES DEADLINE
OCTOBER 26 LEARNING GARDEN, 9AM - NOON